(c) and (d) For effective implementation, Rural Development Programmes are continuously reviewed by the centre through periodical reports, field visits, workshops/seminars and through Central/State level co-ordination committees and special emphasis is laid to improve the professional capabilities of the field functionaries by imparting training at regular intervals as well as by interaction through workshops/seminars.

(e) For qualitative improvement in the implementation of the rural development programmes, the Government have been making constant endeavour to induct talented persons.

Study of Rural Development in Foreign Institutions

2812. SHRI V. RAJAN CHELLAPPA:
SHRI S. AUSTIN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are trying hard to locate foreign countries and foreign institutions for financial aid in foreign currencies for officers to study rural development;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Ministry of Rural Development are ignoring Indian facilities and opting for foreign facilities;

(c) whether it is a fact that UNDP has rejected such efforts; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI PATEL): (a). No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Proposals for UNDP Projects

2813. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Rural Development had submitted any proposals for UNDP Projects in 1994-95;

(b) what are the details of such Projects submitted, with quantum of money involved from UNDP;

(c) whether the project profiles in each such instance, has been cleared; if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Finance Ministry have made any assessment of the national need of some such proposals from Ministry of Rural Development;

(e) what kind of assessment is made by the concerned Department before giving clearance;

(f) whether it is a fact that most of such proposals involve travel, stipends, grants of stipends and nothing substantial; and

(g) whether such proposals of assistance from foreign agencies deserve to be accepted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT) (SHRI UTTAMBHAI PATEL): (a). No, Sir. This Ministry has not submitted any proposal to UNDP for seeking any assistance.

(b) to (g) Do not arise.

Use of Wasteland

2814. SHRIMATI ANANDIBEN JETHABHAI PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of wasteland put to agricultural or horticultural or forestry use in Gujarat State during the last two years;

(b) what is the total area of wasteland remaining in the state;

(c) whether there is any proposal to encourage the landless farmers and the persons belonging to backward and tribal areas of the State by putting the wasteland to be used by them; and

(d) if so, the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS & EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF WASTELAND DEVELOPMENT) (COL. RAM SINGH): (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Upliftment of Villages Facing Absolute Poverty

2815. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of villages in the country which are facing absolute poverty and what is the estimated number of families in these poverty-stricken villages, State-wise;

(b) the programmes have been initiated by Government so far for the upliftment of these villages in the country;

(c) what is the role of the Central Government in tackling the rural poverty and in monitoring the progress in the implementation of the programmes;

(d) whether any latest review with regard to the deficiencies and impediments in the implementation of the programmes to tackle the rural poverty has been made by Government; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof and what strategy is contemplated by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI UTTAMBHAI PATEL): (a) Village-wise details on absolute poverty and estimated number of poor families are not maintained. Based on the 43rd Round of NSS (1987-88), 33.4% persons in the rural areas were below the poverty line. A Statement giving number and percentage of population below the poverty line during 1987-88, State-wise, is enclosed. (*See* below).

(b) and (c) For upliftment of rural poor, Government has implemented two major poverty alleviation programmes namely, Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY).

IRDP aims to provide self-employment to a target group of beneficiaries below the poverty line. Under this programme, assistance to the beneficiaries is given for purchase of productive assets and inputs for income generating activities, whereas JRY aims to provide additional gainful employment to the rural poor. These programmes are constantly reviewed by the Centre through periodical reports, field visits, work-shops and seminars, Centre and State level Coordination Committees and through Concurrent Evaluation studies to identify deficiencies, if any, in their implementation. Besides, for effective monitoring of these programmes, the Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment has also introduced an Area Officers' Scheme. Under this scheme, Officers of the Ministry and from other selected departments are drafted to review the performance of these programmes with special reference to quality, timeliness and proper achievement of physical and financial targets.

(d) and (e) Based on periodical review, some of the deficiencies observed in the IRDP Programmes were (i) low level of per family investment, (ii) deficiencies in making investment projects bankable, (iii) inadequate skills in managing credit based assets by poor families, (iv) low level rate of recovery from the beneficiaries. The strategies adopted to overcome these deficiencies are (a) Raising the overall level of investment per family to Rs. 12,000 (b) improvement